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Social Control In Russia Today

By COLONEL RAYMOND ROBINS

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THE Russian Revolution was the first fundamental economic revolution in the history of the world and the forces that sprung from it will be challenging the world, particularly the western nations, for years to come.

I had rather an exceptional opportunity in Russia. For three months I worked with the Kerensky government, and knew the Minister President, and every member of his Cabinet—some of them quite directly and intimately—also several generals, Commander-in-chief Kornilov, and others in active service on the Russian front. After the bolshevik revolution I knew the various members of the Council of the Peoples Commissaries, the generals in command of soviet forces, and for something like six months I met with Lenin and Trotsky on an average of three times a week. Furthermore, for five months of that time I was the unofficial representative of the American government, so that every communication between the soviet power and the American government, or vice versa, passed through my hands.

THE 7 PER CENT AND THE 93 PER CENT MINDS

I want to present in this paper certain ways of arriving at a better apprehension upon the Russian situation than seems to me to have been always reached. As volumes could be written on Russia I shall have to try simply to suggest certain lines of thought. First, you will find sincere and honest men, or men who have had the reputation of being sincere and honest, absolutely opposite in their statements and in their conclusions upon the Russian situation. Why does that happen? I undertake to say that the best reason for this—there are a number of other reasons—but the best reason is the conflict between what I please to call the indoor 7 per cent palace and tea-table, formal, diplomatic and military mind and the outdoor original, extraordinary situation, 93 per cent mind of Russia. In the old days of Russia 7 per cent had run the show, had been the masters of everything in sight, of

wealth and power and education and property and offices and honors. They were delightful and agreeable people; they were the only persons you needed to know. The formal, diplomatic and military groups found their associations there. After this 7 per cent had been kicked down the back stairs it was still the voice that spoke most generally to the formal, diplomatic, military and indoor mind of the Allied groups and representatives in Russia. I undertake to say that that mind is still persisting and trying to speak for Russia, and that a very considerable propaganda in the capitals of the world—as well as from Petrograd and Moscow—has sought to influence the opinion of the world adversely to the Russian revolution, to the 93 per cent, to the soviet government, to the Bolshevik party, and to the various forces and groups that grew out of that revolution. I undertake to say that some of those persons are entirely sincere and speak what they believe to be true, and some of them are entirely insincere and are definite propagandists because they want their privileges and powers returned to them. But I undertake to say that it is the difference between the indoor tea-table and palace mind, the 7 per cent mind, on the one hand, speaking into the ears of folks in the capitals of the world and Russia, and this outdoor, original 93 per cent fact mind that caused the conflict between the two. You can almost always tell whether the speaker addressing you has spent most of his time with the 7 per cent or the 93 per cent by the nature of the report that he makes on Russia. I wish to state frankly that I have spent most of my time with the 93 per cent.

THE ECONOMIC PARALYSIS

I want to mention another fundamental thing, the economic paralysis in Russia. It is so easy to write about superficial and incidental elements in a great revolution. I yield to no one in opposition, resentment, if you will, and eager effort to prevent murder or atrocities of any kind. I have had a fairly definite record of standing against mob violence where it costs something to stand against mob violence. But I do not surrender my intelligence to the view that seeks out of the inevitable disorder and wrong, and brutality and crime that grow out of a vast revolution, to reason back into an ordered and normal life, and then out of that ordered and normal life make judgment against a revolution-

any situation. So far as I am familiar with the history of the human race, violence and crime and execution after illegal methods have not been absent from any revolution. Cromwell was a trifle violent in Ireland. There was a little violence used by Luther against the Anabaptists and the peasants. We remember that there was some violence in France. But I undertake to say that when the ultimate judgment is written down, it will be recorded that this vast people—180,000,000—who have suffered unnumbered oppressions through centuries, and who arose and in an hour after a long period of enforced ignorance, took the bit in their teeth and went wild and brutal and wrong, blinded with the unaccustomed light, will be recorded as having been the least vindictive and brutal in the history of the great revolutions of the human race.

Underneath the froth, underneath the inevitable incident of disorder and revolution, there was a great fact that has been lost out of sight by many commentators on Russia, namely, the economic paralysis that swept Russia from the beginning, with increasing force to the time when Russia went out of the war and even to the hour when I left the country. I was forced to consider this fact because I was assigned to food and refugees, and in the course of my daily work had to get some reason for this economic dearth at the front and in the great cities of European Russia. In a land that was fabulously rich, that was verily the granary of Europe, why should folks be hungry in Petrograd and in Moscow, and why should the army be ill-supplied at the front? The answer runs as follows: When the war broke out in 1914 the 7 per cent, as from time memorial, were in full possession of all the power, all the wealth, and offices and honor of the Russian people. 1 per cent of that 7 per cent had nearly 100 per cent of the big, economic, financial and industrial management in their hands—the direction of it, the executive administrative part—and that 1 per cent of the 7 per cent that had nearly 100 per cent of the economic, financial and industrial management of Russia when the war broke out, was nearly 100 per cent German, and it did not even claim to be Russian German—it was non-resident German in most instances. How did that come about?

The Russian bourgeoisie, the educated, the privileged man or woman, is one of the most delightful persons loose on this old

planet. Fifteen or twenty of them sitting and talking at a table are, I think, the most agreeable companions and have the widest range in conversation I ever had the privilege to mingle with, *but* they are not administrators. The economic and industrial organization mind is rare among the educated Russian group. They cared for the ballet; they cared for music; they cared for art and literature; they cared for the large expansive ideas, and being very rich—250,000 acres being an ordinary estate, and many times their estates ran into millions, with great wealth in mineral lands and forests, with great power and possessions—they hired the nearest competent, executive and industrial mind. That nearest mind in Russia, almost without exception, was a well trained German or Austrian, educated in Berlin or Vienna, taught the Russian language, told the physical story of Russia, and many times operating in Russia with a secret subsidy from Berlin for the definite purpose of the economic, financial, cultural penetration of Russia in the interest of the Central Powers. That had been going on for forty years, and in the last twenty years it had extensively and intensively developed. Hence when the war broke out the economic mind of Russia was German. That mind abandoned Russia, that mind went back to Berlin and to Vienna, expecting to return on the heels of a victorious army and own what it had previously managed. They wrought havoc as they went. They set fire to flowing oil wells and turned water on coal fields in the mines of the Donetz coal basin. Some of them submerged and became secret information agents of the German Foreign Office.

Within four days after the declaration of war in 1914 a partial economic paralysis began in the Russian economic system, and there was a vacuum at the top where the brain, the organizing mind of Russia had existed. That economic paralysis spread out over the Russian land, and artery after artery of normal economic life found itself being depleted and finally practically paralyzed. The Russian bourgeoisie answered admirably to the call of patriotism. Counts and countesses, princes and princesses, the wise and learned and beautiful went out in the service of their country to do what they could—very much like some of our privileged folk in America answered to the call of our country in its time of need—but they answered with insufficient experience

and without the organizing mind as a national genius. The result was that while now and again there were those who rendered splendid service—like that of Prince Lvov who organized the Zemtvos and Volasts and the Russian Red Cross with extraordinary skill—they never caught up with the economic paralysis. And, as just a flash to show that what I am stating is true, do you remember that the original revolution of March, 1917, was preceded by bread riots in Petrograd and Moscow and was really precipitated by the economic paralysis and misery in the great cities of Russia? Now as soon as the revolution came, all this aristocratic help that had come in to fill this vacuum that had been left by the retreating Germans, was suspect of the revolution. The bourgeoisie, the autocracy, all of the nobles there became suspect of the revolution. They were thrown out because they had come into the service under the autocracy.

THE DOCTRINE OF DEFEATISM

The economic paralysis, the vacuum at the top, extended under Kerensky's provisional government and on down to the bolshevik revolution. When you get actual history, facts which will ultimately be written down in spite of individuals or groups and prejudiced opinion, it will be found that this economic paralysis was at the base of the break-up of the Russian army, was at the base of the defeat of the whole national life of Russia, and was altogether the center, and, if you will, the hot-bed out of which defeatist doctrines and extreme bolshevist doctrines were developed. As a matter of fact, in the army and everywhere you found the effect of three years of suffering, of hunger, of cold, of discouragement and of failure, because the economic base of life had in a great measure failed for the vast masses of the Russian people. When you found in the barracks a cry for peace that was sweeping the army, you found that it was sweeping the army something like this:

"Comrades," said a man in the barracks where I was speaking to soldiers urging the Allied cause, "Comrades, we went to fight because the Czar forced us to go to fight. You can't blame us for beginning because the whip and sword were over us. Why did the Czar want us to fight? Because he wanted to put the Greek Cross over St. Sofia and to get the Dardanelles. Now, we have overthrown our Czar. Why should we keep on fighting? The Germans, comrades, in the trenches are fighting us because their Kaiser forces them to fight us, just

as our Czar forced us to fight them. Why should we keep on fighting? If we don't fight them they won't fight us. They are going to overcome the Kaiser pretty soon, and if we quit fighting them they will have the time for their revolution. Comrades, we have been cold and hungry for three years. Four millions of our brothers have died or are in prisons in foreign lands. Have you heard, comrades, that they are distributing the land back in our Province? If we don't go back we won't get ours."

There was the general doctrine of defeatism throughout the army of Russia and it rested back upon the three years of cold, hunger, and economic paralysis. I undertake to state that there is no possibility of understanding the Russian situation unless you get that economic situation; and I want to state also that it will point to wise action in relation to Russia at the present time.

Defeatism in Russia is not a German product. In the Russo-Japanese war the Russian generals and Russian members of the government under the Czar said that it took two regiments at home to keep one regiment fighting in Japan because of the revolutionary gospel of defeatism. The late war was a Czar's autocratic war and was cursed in the mind of revolutionary Russia by the fact that the Czar began Russia's part in the war. The war was his war, the war of the autocracy, and, therefore, the revolutionary group, who had fought the Czar and the autocracy and denounced the war as an imperialistic enterprise, when they took command of Russia after a successful revolution, found it very difficult to say that they were supporting the Allies and that the Allies' cause was just. I am simply stating the difficulty so that you may see the actual facts in Russia.

THE SOVIET STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL CONTROL

If we are going to think intelligently about Russia, we want to separate the Bolshevik party and its formulas from the soviet structure of social control. There is in Russia a new binder in the national life of the people, so far as the vast mass of peasants and workers are concerned and that is the soviet structure of social control. I came upon it not because I wanted to, but because I had to. The soviet first met me in southern Russia where I was dealing with actual tasks of food and refugees, with my pocket full of Kerensky credentials. I found that those credentials did not amount to very much. I found that the people did not pay any attention to them—those who were supposed to be the repre-

sentatives of the provisional government—and they had no power to do what they said they would do. I began to find out where the power was. I found an old order that had been very powerful; I found the dead carcass, the lifeless remains of genuine power—the autocracy, whether you like it or not, had been a real thing. The Czar, as head of the Church, and head of the State, and head of the Secret Police, and head of the Black Hundred, and head of the Cossack Whip and Sword, had exercised genuine, mystical and forcible power that ran to the remotest villages of the Russian Empire with a real authority. When that power went down, as it did in March, 1917, it was a very narrow structure, a very highly centralized power, resting largely on mysticism and the brutal force of the Cossack Whip and Sword. When that had gone the whole thing crumbled utterly and the actual binder in Russian life passed; it was very much as if the whole nation was disintegrated and lying loose out-of-doors. The physical integrity, as well as the political and moral integrity of the empire had for the moment dissolved. The provisional government of Prince Lvov and the provisional government of Kerensky were superimposed, paper consent affairs on top of this disorganized mass that came from the break-up of the autocracy. Their roots never got down into the actual provincial and village life of Russia; they never had genuine power, except in Petrograd and Moscow and in some barracks where rifles were behind the provisional government. At the very hour when Kerensky was supposed to be exercising authority over Russia, there were local soviets in various places and they were beginning to be a real power in Russia. Those soviets were the genuine force. For instance, I say genuine because when the chairman of the local soviet said, “You can get a train,” I got the train; and when he said I could get six wagons to take grain from the village to the station, I got six wagons! In other words, it was a genuine social binder. Now, what was this soviet? You hear those who say it was a mere workmen’s revolutionary council in great cities, and those who speak of great cities alone, speak truly. That is true if you only look at the cities, but the moment you turn your eye on the villages you find an old, historic, democratic social control, known as the “village mir”—a sort of town meeting, broader and narrower than our town meetings—broader in personnel and nar-

rower in jurisdiction. The personnel consisted of men and women with interests in mir lands who sat on equal terms in the village mir; their jurisdiction was narrow because they were held to communal land questions, roads, to sanitation, and so on, and were very limited in power. The Czar and autocracy, afraid of the democratic character of the mirs, would not allow them to have delegate relationships and kept them within local environment. As soon as the autocracy was repudiated, as soon as that power of the 7 per cent was lifted by the revolution of March, '17, the mirs grew up into district, municipal, provincial soviets, overnight as it were. Joining with the Workmen's Councils of the great cities they became the all-Russian National Soviet, a genuine new revolutionary binder that came out of the past. And this is the only genuine binder, in my judgment, that has existed in Russia since the autocracy went down. That is the structure of the revolutionary government of the mass of Russia. What party and what formulas invest that structure is adventitious. It might be, as it is today, the Bolshevik party. It might be the Menshevik party, or it might be any other party. The machinery there is just like our own city councils and our own state legislatures and our congresses here under our form of government. The party that invests it may be Republican, Democratic, or, if they get enough votes, Socialist. So you get the difference between the Bolshevik party and the actual social control of the soviet structure, which is a genuine thing in my judgment and the only revolutionary binder in Russia.

THE SPREAD OF BOLSHEVIK FORMULAS

Why was it possible for the Bolshevik party formulas to take such a sweep in Russia? Why did these formulas have the sweep that they actually did have and that they now have in Russia? People can lie about it as much as they like, but a nation does not risk its life for fourteen months without having some reason for it. There is a reason behind the Russian revolution, just as there is for Grape Nuts. There is always a reason everywhere. I prefer to understand the situation rather than to denounce it. For sixty years prior to 1914 there had been revolutionary propaganda, and during that time the structure of the Russian despotism had not changed an atom. During those two

generations the structure of every other state in the world had modified toward liberalism. Even China awoke after a sleep of centuries and modified the structure of her government. Cossack Whip and Sword had held Russia static for all this time and every liberal development had been suppressed ruthlessly. Every little educational society among peasants, like that of Tolstoi's, as soon as it was extended, was denounced as revolutionary and the leaders imprisoned or killed. Every little economic organization, such as the miners' organization in the coke and iron fields, was suppressed by military force, and the leaders put in prison. All gatherings and meetings for free speech, free press, and general discussion of social interests and government were denounced as revolutionary and the leaders imprisoned or killed. So for sixty years men said over and over again, in cellars and garrets, in forests and Siberian prisons, "When we get power we will pass this decree and that will settle this! When we get power we will pass that decree and that will settle that!" So there was a definite formula, mind you, in revolutionary Russia, and never having had a chance to try indoor formulas against outdoor facts, it could afford to believe in them. You know there never was a set of indoor formulas made in the history of the human race that you could take outdoors and work with actual life. The Russian revolutionary mind had an indoor formula which was generally distributed over the conscious mind of the masses of Russia. I have stated that 84 per cent of the people in Russia are peasants, 9 per cent are proletarians (people who work in the factories, mills, mines, etc.) and 7 per cent are the privileged class. Some one may ask if I believe that 84 per cent, consisting of the peasantry, really had these formulas in their minds? Now, this is what I mean to say: 9 per cent of the proletarians of the Russian people are nearly entirely conscious and revolutionary; 40 per cent of that 9 per cent retain their connection with villages. Twice a year they go back for planting time and harvest. They are the traveled persons from the village. They are the wise persons, the persons who have been out in the great world and when they come back the villagers gather around them and listen to their story. They always say that a good time is coming with the revolution, and they always repeat over the formulas they have heard in the great industrial cities. So throughout Russia in

the actual conscious peasant mind there was an agreement upon certain formulas of socialism. Why were those formulas socialistic? The Russian mind is a collectivist's mind and moves out on life on collectivist methods. The people move in villages, not as individuals like the Anglo-Saxons. They are collectivists—they move together. That accounts for the collectivist dogmas. Are they materialists? Not at all. They are mystics. They are intensely religious. Why then do they take up with a very definite and, if you will, brutal materialistic class formula? Let me illustrate by a story. I am walking through a portal—it is the portal of the most Holy Gate that opens through the wall into the Kremlin in the Holy City of Moscow. It is the most holy ground in Russia, and a red guard, with bayoneted gun, walks by my side. He takes off his cap. I am interested and curious. We move on and as we pass an Icon he stops and kisses it and makes the sign of the cross. Here is a member of the Guard who is ready to take orders from Lenin and Trotsky tomorrow. I say to him, "Do you believe in God?" "*Da*," which is yes. "Do you believe in Christ?" "*Da*," which is yes. "Do you believe in the Church?" "*Net, net*" (no, no). "The Church has been the spy system of autocracy for two hundred years." And it is that fact, that the Greek Catholic Church had been the æsthetic and worshiping and musical center, if you will, of the 7 per cent and yet at the same time had been the spy system of autocracy upon the 93 per cent, which accounts for the 93 per cent's utterly ruthless dealings with that institution and its utter lack of power and authority over the 93 per cent in the hour of national strain. A class church is the most effective poison against the reality of the Christian doctrine that you can devise.

Many persons had adopted the formulas who did not believe in them. There is a propaganda mind, entirely familiar to intelligent people, common in public life and affairs, a propaganda mind that claims and promises more than it believes, in the hours of propaganda. Then in the hours of administrative tasks it seeks to relieve itself from the obligations of its past utterance. I suggest that the reason that that wonderful and historic character, Madame Breshkovsky, lost all power over her own workmen and peasants was because she had spent forty years in the villages and factories saying to the villagers, "It is wrong to pay rent to the

landlords. When the revolution comes you will get the land and pay no rent." She would say to the workmen, "Your labors have built all these factories. When the revolution comes you will get the factories." She would say to the mass meetings of peasants and workingmen, "You will run the government." She had helped to distribute Russian copies of *The Communist Manifesto* and translations of *Doskoptal*. She helped in every way to create a demand which, when the revolution came, she sought to withstand. She sought to withstand it in patriotic and noble service, and supported the Allies, and all that was generous and fine in her nature resisted this Frankenstein, in a sense, of her own building. "The old lady used to say to us that we would get the land and the factories, but the old lady is getting old now and we can't pay any attention to her," said the peasants and workmen of the soviets. And when Kerensky was overthrown she, who when I went into Russia was the most powerful personality in the land, was absolutely without anybody to do her deference, because having raised up this situation she was no longer ready to be its leader in the hour of its power. Let me give one more illustration. Twelve years ago while in New York I was invited, because I was a social worker and interested in social questions, to go down one evening to Greenwich Village, Washington Square. I went down there and as I entered the parlor there was a very delightful gentleman, just fresh from Harvard, dis-canting upon the perfect system of Carl Marx, and showing how scientific socialism was the whole answer to the enigma of human society. He was presenting class struggle ideal, the materialist's conception of society, the iron law of wages, and all that, and he had the whole formula in a perfect statement. There were lovely little girls there, charming persons, fresh from Bryn Mawr and Wellesley, holding their hands and listening in great rapture to this wonderful proclamation. I lived to see that gentleman sitting in a room in the Hotel Europe in Petrograd at an hour when he was charged with important public tasks in the strain of a great nation, in the strain of his own national life, in the strain of the world's fight for liberty, and then his formulas that he had spoken for in the ease and comfort of Washington Square came down the Nevsky in the form of bearded peasants and hard-handed workingmen with bayoneted guns saying, "That which

you taught, we intend to do. We will push out your Kerensky and we will push out all of this stuff of support of the Allies. A class war is the only war of any interest. The Allies' war is simply a competition of capitalism for the markets of the world. We know what we are doing. Rouse mit you." Now the only thing I was troubled about was that this same gentleman, in the hour when his child came forth said, "That ain't socialism. That's thieves and murderers and German agents." Yet it was not a thing in the world but the revolutionary peasants and workingmen in Russia coming out with the program of that propaganda and trying to do logically and courageously what they believed they had a right to do. The fact that it was wrong is an entirely different matter. Our own conscious judgment is the only thing that determines right or wrong for us in this human world.

THE QUESTION OF GERMAN INFLUENCE

Were there German agents and German money and propaganda in the Bolshevik revolution? Why, of course, there were. No intelligent person has denied it. There were German agents in the Bolshevik government, but that has been true of every government in Russia for twenty years. There were German agents in the autocracy, and they had more influence there than in the soviet government. Von Stuermer, a Germanophile, was made Premier under the autocracy by the German interest at the Russian court, and anybody who knows Russian history knows that to be true. In the Kerensky government a minister of his Cabinet was removed because he was believed to be a German agent, and in the soviet government there were German agents, and there was German money in that revolution. I had in my possession for about sixty days, part of the Okhrana records, the old secret police records—those that were not burned in the old Department of Justice in Petrograd, and all the records (not any of them had been burned) from the center of the Okhrana in Moscow. I was translating them in relation to German agent propaganda in Russia. What appeared from the record, and I think will be ultimately historically maintained, was that the Germans for at least twenty years, and probably longer than that, had kept two propaganda groups in Russia and supplied them well with money, to represent the German interest and report back to Berlin, neither group having anything to do with the other in Russia.

I dealt with the revolutionary group in the main, because that was the group I wanted to be informed upon. For instance, a general strike was called in Petrograd and Moscow just before mobilization began in 1914. It was suppressed by the Cossack Whip and Sword, but it was not suppressed until the secret police got documents and testimony that proved that better than a million marks had been spent through perfectly honest revolutionary persons for the purpose of precipitating that strike in the interest of Germany before mobilization in 1914. As soon as mobilization began they commenced to work with the group that operated through the court and the autocracy, and that group had, in December, 1916, bought Rasputin—they did not have to buy the Czarina. And the two together sought to sweep the weak Czar into a separate peace with the Kaiser. Later it was thought that the best thing to do was to allow the two groups apparently to go to it and let the best man win. The revolutionary group said, "We will bring revolution." The autocratic group said, "We will bring a separate peace"—and both were allowed to go to it. The revolutionary movement won and the Czar was overthrown. As soon as that took place, again the German agents in Russia began, one group with the Right and one with the Left, one helping the Bolsheviki and saying, "Why don't you have a real revolution? Why do you fool away your time with Kerensky?" And then saying to the Grand Dukes and privileged class through the other group, "You don't want a Kerensky revolution. What you want is law and order after the fashion of the German power." So they were working both ways, and that condition had existed in the Russian situation for many years. Were the bolshevik leaders German agents? My judgment is that Lenin and Trotzsky were convinced international socialist revolutionists, and were honest and as free from a direct relation with German militarists' propaganda as I am. I regard their formulas as economically impossible and morally wrong, but I know no reason through that fact why I should slander or libel courageous men who fought and risked their lives for their formulas every hour for fourteen months. In dealing with them at numbers of points at no time in six months did either of them ever break his word. At no time did they say they would do a thing and not do it. They were able to deliver effective power at

every point. We sent a train of supplies to Jassy in Roumania from Russia under bolshevik rifles and frank, that could by no circumstances serve the German general staff. We developed actual points of contact and of advantage for the Allies. They never claimed at any time to be the friends of the established capitalist governments, but always to be their enemy and to be engaged, if you will, in the world revolution of the proletariat. I never heard of any hypocritical pretenses of friendship as regards ultimate political purposes. But Lenin and Trotzsky, being competent politicians, whatever else they are, saw the economic paralysis, and knew that economic support could come alone from one of two quarters—either the Central Powers or America. They wanted it to come from America because they thought that getting it there they would have a chance to fight against German militarist autocracy, which threatened them as well as the rest of the world. In my judgment, the fact of their world propaganda was one thing and the fact of its immediate impact upon Germany, Bulgaria and Austria was an entirely different thing; and in an hour of war you had to deal with the facts that were at hand.

ATTITUDE OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

I wish to state that the soviet power sought economic coöperation with America. Under instructions from the ambassador of the United States, I dealt with them for two months, holding out to them that, if they would not make a separate peace and if they would refuse ratification of that peace when it was forced on them by the bayonet, America would give economic and military support to the soviet power. I was so instructed in initialed instructions from the American ambassador. I am very glad that I have those initialed instructions, because memories sometimes fail a bit. During all that time there was a definite and understood proposition before the soviet government. That proposition was accepted by the soviet government in a written statement of questions on the fifth of March, 1918, after that government had offered to put our officers on the frontier to prevent raw materials going to the Central Powers and we had refused, out of ignorance of the situation, in my judgment, after they had offered to give us the Trans-Siberian Railroad and the railroads of Russia. This offer was not only for their own benefit so that we could dis-

tribute food, but also for our benefit so that we could remove munitions and supplies from the western frontier, where, if the Brest-Litovsk Conference failed, the Germans were sure to get them. We had eight weeks in which to work, and then when the conference failed and the Germans advanced on all fronts, the Germans took hundreds of tons of munitions and supplies—twelve inch guns that had never been shot which we could have removed, and with which they killed the Allied soldiers in the March drive and in the June drive on the western front. That was part of the confusion, and the reason of the confusion was always this: When the Allied interests would admit that it was wise to do this work—evacuating supplies—even if the soviet leaders were German agents, were thieves and murderers, they would finally say, “But, Robins, if we coöperate with them to do this work don’t you know in three weeks this government will be overthrown and we will be discredited with the new government? Don’t you know what is coming down from Finland and coming up from the Ukraine and coming out of Siberia?” All of that came from the tea-table palace talk of the 7 per cent class. How many times has the soviet government been overthrown in the last fourteen months? Just as often as the indoor mind of Russia has cared to peddle its latest tale. It is a great outdoor situation at every turn of the road. This particular proposition was presented to the American government and to the British government. It was endorsed by the British High Commissioner, Mr. Bruce-Lockhart. It was endorsed by the American ambassador, David R. Francis. It was endorsed practically by each one of the important Allied interests—English and American—in Russia at that time. The American government and the English government never responded. I went down to the fourth All-Russian Soviet, representing the American ambassador, to wait for word from America, and the conference was delayed two days at my urgency—Lenin being ready to take action (Trotzsky was really sulking in Petrograd in those days) and, in the final hour, after two days of debate, at a half hour before mid-night I am sitting on the steps of the platform, Lenin in a chair at the back of the platform motions to me. He says, “What have you heard from your government?” I say, “I have heard nothing.” I ask him what Lockhart has heard from his government? He replies, “I

have heard nothing." Lenin says, "They will not support the revolutionary soviet and the peasants and workmen even against the Kaiser and they cannot fight alone because of the economic condition and military condition in Russia, so I will advocate peace." He then stepped forward and spoke for that shameful peace, and it was adopted.

There is a great historic setting here that cannot be dealt with in a paper of this length. I have outlined certain things that I believe ultimate historic truth will vindicate, and may I add this—if I am on the wrong side of the truth of the Russian situation, so much the worse for me. The ultimate truth of the Russian situation is finally going to be told. It is too significant a challenge in the history of the human race not to be thoroughly understood, and instead of disposing of it as the work of German agents, thieves and murderers, it will have to be disposed of on the basis of the sincere and courageous men who have risked their lives every hour for fourteen months, and who, after they had gotten \$200,000,000 in gold in the State Banks, instead of going when the going was good, preferred to stay and risk their lives. It is absurd to esteem and to estimate this tremendous performance as though it were entirely a German agent affair. Ultimately we will get the larger historic truth.

In conclusion, I would like to submit the following recommendations in relation to the Russian situation:

First: Lift embargo at once on all Russian fronts.

Second: Enter into direct negotiations for an armistice on all fronts where Allied or Czech forces are engaged.

Third: Insist in armistice negotiations upon general political amnesty to be declared and guaranteed by both sides; Allied forces to be retained in Russia solely for the purpose of enforcing such guarantees and to be used after signing of armistice in reorganizing and operating Russian railways primarily for transport of food supplies throughout Russia.

Fourth: Send relief through American Red Cross to Petrograd and Moscow immediately upon signing of armistice.

Fifth: Send Commission of Inquiry, with industrial and trade experts, to Moscow to ascertain and report on present situation in Soviet Russia and best means of bringing social peace, economic reorganization and relief to all the people of Russia.

And may I say that there is in Russia the largest unused market for secondary production that there is in the world—the largest market for the absorption of manufactured product that there is lying outdoors and with the largest raw materials to pay for those products of any nation in the world. There is a vacuum in the economic order in Russia that has come out of the war. A hundred years of commercial penetration by the Central Powers could be beaten now and we could be the most favored of any economic and industrial nation in Russia if we would use intelligence and brains instead of allowing ourselves to be fanned into stupid passion about the atrocities and all the shameless talk about the nationalization of women that never has been anything but cheap, miserable lies of propaganda, from the beginning to the end, and was recently withdrawn, even by Harold Williams, who believes much that is evil against bolshevism and whose wife is Madam Tyrkova, a noble Russian woman.

What about bolshevism in America? There is a general challenge of the institutions of the western world and of the Christian conscience in the materialist force control of the Russian mass. It is understandable in Russia—it comes out of a past historic story, out of brutal autocracy, out of ignorance and out of terrible economic misery. It has no place in American institutions and absolutely will not grow anywhere in America after discussion and fair understanding. But if we refuse to discuss it fairly, refuse to understand it, and denounce it for what it is not, creating a false sympathy and a false feeling of resentment, for which there is absolutely no foundation whatever in the actual facts—it may grow in America. If we suppress free speech and suppress the free press and do not allow the liberal foundations of this Republic to endure, and which are guaranteed in our Constitution, then we will create bolshevists in great groups, who will be bolshevists out of passion and resentment against what they feel is injustice and wrong. If you allow such a development of lawless passion to become general as took place in some cities on May Day where men ruthlessly beat others because they wore a red tie or because they said they were socialists—then we will have bolshevism in America. That sort of situation is the very matter of bolshevism in this country or any other. We are dealing with a genuinely serious theme that needs to be understood and needs to be

dealt with for what it really is and not for what it is not. And may I say to you that wherever any group of men or women seek to overthrow this government by force or violence, or wherever they seek to deprive persons of the rights of persons or property by violence or force, they should be suppressed by an unfaltering and overwhelming exercise of the force of the public law, and they will be so suppressed. There is no city in America that will not support a definite use of force within the law against persons who seek to violate the public law. But simply to think that the bayonet and bludgeon can answer ideas—that is an old failure in the history of the human race. Behind the mass movement in Russia is the misery of countless generations, is the hunger for a better human life. With a false economy and a false method, in my judgment, behind American unrest in certain places there is a definite economic wrong and a desire for a better human life—and I refer to some non-Union coal mines that I knew pretty well a little while ago. They are not so bad now as they were in the old days. I refer to the twelve-hour day and the seven-day week steel mills. I refer, too, to the sweat shops in the West Side of my own city and the East Side of New York. I refer to the rotten police courts where justice is a sham and a pretense in many of our great cities and where the poor, the least of these, invited to our shores are meeting America at America's worst, and are beginning to believe the worst about America as a whole. It is a very small portion of America that needs remedying, but that portion needs it terribly. American intelligence and resource, the Christian conscience and the democratic state are adequate to meet and answer everyone of the just needs of American life within the Constitution and the law. The only answer to the desire for a better human life is, in the last analysis, *a better human life*. There is none other answer, and the world is engaged in realizing that answer, and all forces of reaction, all who look hungrily to the old order, are doomed to disappointment in the great movement of the world's life. The German order met ideas with force in a very finely disciplined fashion. Bismarck started out against the Social Democratic protest against militarism with blood and iron, and when he started there were less than 300,000 voting Social Democrats in Germany and when he finished there were 3,000,000 voting Social Democrats in Germany.

The Czar started against ideas with bayonets in the finest organization of mere blind force that the world has ever known. He had the mystical power of the Black Hundred. He had the Okhrana, the secret police, to dog the foot-steps of every suspect. He had the Cossack Whip and Sword. He had the power to banish to Siberia a hundred over night without trial, and the answer to that power, and the answer to that method is Nikolai Lenin in the high court of the Czars in the Kremlin and Moscow, and Leon Trotzsky in the winter palace of the Czars in Petrograd. The question is, will America be as intelligent as England in dealing with the forces of unrest, holding firmly to law and order and yet daring the adventure of free discussion, on which this Republic was founded? We then shall answer with the serving church and the serving state and the serving industrial order that brings the better human life to more men, women and children than is brought elsewhere in all the world—and on that sure foundation we can stand and meet the clamor of alien systems and bid the distant generations hail.